



DIVISION OF POLICE

DATE: December 6, 2019

TO: Chief of Police Calvin D. Williams

FROM: Inspector General Christopher Paul Viland, Esq. #3700

SUBJECT: Familiarization with and Recommendations RE: IA Pro© Software

Sir,

At your request, I have taken steps to familiarize myself with the operation of IA Pro© software as currently used by the Division. This familiarization was initiated with installation of and access to software in the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). Additionally, the I.G. attended basic software training and the vendor's user manual was reviewed. Preliminary interviews were conducted with various Division members, including, but not limited to Sgt. Stacho and Det. Bracken, current IA Pro© administrators; staff in the Case Prep Unit; staff in the I.A. Unit; Dr. Issa, the CDP Data Collection and Analysis Coordinator; and, Mr. Kodellas, the OPS' data analyst.

Based upon this preliminary review, the following recommendations are made:

1. Initial review of work flow and process in the Case Preparation Unit revealed that IA Pro© software usage was simply to access and refer to individual case documents and that other potential uses of the software were not being utilized to full effect. For example, Case Prep continues to maintain separate Excel spreadsheets to track individual cases through their system and there is currently no database methodology in place to monitor case timelines or to create monthly status reports of their work product. After consultation with Sgt. Lanton and the CDP IA Pro© administrator staff, it was determined that there were administrative and hearing options available within the software package to docket and track everything currently being done externally. Involved parties are currently moving towards usage of IA Pro© more comprehensively in the Case Preparation Unit. Additionally, after conversations with the Case Preparation Staff, there appeared to be a reasonable need to customize some (limited) software options or pick lists to more adequately describe Division activities

Recommendation: Continue progression toward using the full capabilities of the IA Pro© software in the Case Preparation Unit, to include docketing, hearing management and monthly status and reporting capabilities.

Recommendation: Continue to work with the IA Pro© vendor and Division IA Pro© professionals to create or customize certain fields to the specific needs of the Case Preparation Unit.

2. Similarly, while reviewing OPS investigations in IA Pro©, it was revealed that the hearing or docketing options or processes are not being used in their operations either. And, again, this provides a handicap to tracking status and data on timelines, especially in a way which would be useful to the OIG as it fulfills the mandates of the Settlement Agreement¹.

Recommendation: Work with OPS staff to encourage or incentivize full usage of the docketing, hearing management and monthly status and reporting capabilities in IA Pro© so as to increase transparency and demonstrate timeliness especially in regards to analyses required of the OIG.

3. The OPS has a duty to be transparent in its investigations, especially in the provision of information to individual complainants in their process, and is seeking to provide ease of access through status updates of current cases online via website. The transparency sought by the OPS is in the spirit of the Consent Decree as follows “. . . To promote public trust and confidence in CDP, constitutional and effective policing, officer and public safety, and the sustainability of reforms, CDP will create, in accordance with this Agreement, formal and informal mechanisms that facilitate ongoing communication between CDP and the many Cleveland communities it serves.”²; and, “. . . and ensure that OPS operates in a manner that is transparent and accountable to the community it serves.”³

Recommendation: Continue to work with the City IT Department, the IA Pro© vendor and OPS to ensure that IA Pro© database information can be securely transferred to a website compatible and connected in a way to provide real time public status of OPS investigations via the web.

4. The OIG has an obligation pursuant to the Decree to collect and analyze all sustained findings and the discipline imposed, including the use of mitigating and aggravating factors, to assess disciplinary trends and to determine whether discipline is consistently applied, fair, and based on the nature of the allegations⁴.

¹ *United States of America v. City of Cleveland*, United States District Court, Northern District of Ohio, Eastern Division, 1:15 CV 01046, Settlement Agreement at ¶253(f).

² *Id.*, at ¶14.

³ *Id.* at ¶194.

⁴ *Id.* at ¶253(g).

Recommendation: Utilize IA Pro© software and applications to access, create and report statistical data tables to meet the needs of the Decree. The OIG is currently working with the Data Collection and Analysis Coordinator to create time limited reporting of sustained events from various sources including IA and OPS so that the data can be analyzed appropriately. The reporting is currently being developed for initial testing with a plan to modify as appropriate and have available for calendar year 2020 and moving forward. Further information on this process should be available by the time the 2020 Work Plan for the OIG is published.

5. Categorization of data access in IA Pro© can cause data retrieval and reporting issues, apparently. Users without clearance to read Internal Affairs data, for example, will not have such data available or returned in queries or reporting functions that they may use. This is most problematic when the IA case is completed and the case has been completely disposed of, yet the data is not reclassified for more accessibility or use in administrative functions for the Division. This causes specific difficulty in two areas, public record requesting and administratively tracking discipline. The Case Prep Unit has difficulty in ensuring full disclosure of lawfully requested discipline records when they cannot view or retrieve old, closed IA cases that have not been declassified. Also, when attempting to retrieve monthly or annual reporting regarding Division discipline trends and timelines, those same cases will not appear and will cause disparity in the data being used.

Recommendation: Standardize policy in the IA Unit to declassify closed and disposed of investigative cases to allow more complete access for public records and Division analysis.

6. The sheer volume of work being pushed through the Blue Team / IA Pro© systems is causing some lack of efficiency due to items in the system that are not timely addressed (on 10-28-19, for example, there were over 750 items in the cue requiring action).

Recommendations:

- a) *Supervisors in the chain of command should work to ensure that subordinates are processing Blue Team and IA Pro© entries and tasks in the timeliest manner possible.*
- b) *In the same vein, IA Pro© administrators should work with the vendor and research any tools available that would flag entries that have not been addressed in specific time periods, either to supervisors for attention, or to alternate members to make necessary entries.*
- c) *Certain types of incidents in Blue Team / IA Pro© should be considered for shortening of the approval chain of command. Incidents like Secondary Employment, for example, may be successfully documented and maintained in a more timely and efficient manner without a full chain of command approval process. The Division should consider editing or abbreviating those types of incidents that are most amenable to the process.*

7. After cursory review, it is very apparent that the first years of use of the IA Pro© systems were not consistent nor complete by various different users and user classes. This has led to a lack of reliable data prior to 2018; and even some of the data in 2018 may not be able to be validated consistently (See #5 above, for example).

Recommendations:

- a) *Do not have an expectation that data retrieved through automatic reporting functions or through simple data analysis metrics will be of use in analyzing trends or in comparisons over time until data capture is more consistent.*
- b) *Formalize the specific data capture processes for use of the system over all user groups as soon as practicable. Specifically, disposition data must be standardized across all user groups and types of cases. Update and standardize pick lists and tables and ensure user training to support consistency in usage and provide more usable data.*

8. Recreating entire case files either in paper form or on separate electronic media is redundant and inefficient as compared to the tools available in IA Pro©.

Recommendations:

- a) *Utilize the tools available in IA Pro© to release discovery or documents directly to union representatives, hearing officers and / or to the Safety Director's office in disciplinary matters. As long as access settings are set appropriately, providing access to the files is inestimably more time efficient than current practice and provides log information that benefits the Division to show actual usage and access by third parties.*
- b) *Provided that IA Pro© server data is appropriately imaged and/or backed up so as to be, in effect, permanently available, duplicate hard copy discipline files are redundant and should be considered for discontinuation.*

9. When cases are transferred between different user groups using IA Pro©, for example, when an OPS case is sent to IA or Case Prep, then the transferring unit can no longer access the case. This prevents the transferring unit from correcting or cleaning up their data or accessing it for data analysis purposes.

Recommendation: Work with the different user groups and the IA Pro© vendor to develop either a working relationship or a software solution that will allow valid users of the same data simultaneous access to non-specific aspects of cases to allow for quality control of data, analysis of data, or other legitimate positive purpose.

10. Attempts to query data on usage times have proven unsuccessful. There is currently no method to administratively monitor the amount of time spent in the Blue Team

/ IA Pro© system by users, nor is there a method to effectively track and/or review use of administrative time in the system by peer comparison, etc. The Division, therefore, cannot identify users who may need additional support or training using any tools in the system. The Division is hampered in assessing usage efficiencies or choke points in the process.

Recommendation: Continue to work with the IA Pro© vendor to request and/or assess system administrator tools and reports to improve this functionality.

11. After cursorily viewing the operations in the Case Preparation Unit and discussions with Sgt. Lanton, it appears there is a need for a dedicated data entry professional with specific IA Pro© expertise and training in the unit, especially if other recommendations in this memo are taken into account.

Recommendation: Consider reviewing the staffing needs of the Case Preparation Unit in light of future possible use of IA Pro© at higher and more detailed levels and taking into account the level of expertise needed to input and to extract the best and cleanest information and data from the system. Consider that any additional staff, at whatever level is determined appropriate, should function as liaison between the various charging entities in the Division's disciplinary processes (specific conflict issues are addressed in a separate memorandum regarding the Division's disciplinary process; OIG Work Product #19-003M).

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CP Viland', with a stylized flourish.

Christopher Paul Viland, Esq.
Inspector General
Cleveland Division of Police
Work Product Number 19002-S

cc: *via email only*: Deputy Chief J. O'Neill
Hon. Gregory White